

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 7028

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CG, US, EG
SUBJ: BAMASY BRIEFING ON FINDINGS OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY
DEL TO ZAIRE

REF (A) STATE 91855, (B) CAIRO 6859,

SUMMARY: GAMASY BRIEFS ON FINDINGS OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY MISSION TO ZAIRE, APRIL 8-14. ESTIMATES INVADERS AS NO MORE THAN TWO TO THREE THOUSAND PERSONS. THEIR OBJECT IS TO TAKE KOWELZI AND DECLARE SHABA AS INDEPENDENT STATE. CUBAN ASSISTANCE MAINLY IN PLANNING. WHILE MUBOTO STILL HAS PLENTY OF TROOPS, THEY LACK MOTIVATION AND ARE CURRENTLY IN PROCESS BEING REORGANIZED BY FRENCH/BELGIAN TEAM. THIS WILL TAKEN TEN TO TWELVE WEEKS. MUBOTO CONVINCED FOREIGN TROOPS NECESSARY TO HANDLE SITUATION. MOROCCANS STUCK ABOUT THIRTY KILOMETERS WEST OF KOWELZI. TWO EGYPTIAN ANTONOV'S DEPLOYED TO AIRLIFT SUPPLIES TO MOROCCANS BETWEEN KINSHASA AND KOWELZI. EGYPTIANS CONSIDERED SENDING CREWS TO FLY ZAIRIAN MIRAGES, BUT PRACTICAL PROBLEMS PRECLUDE USE OF SUCH AIRCRAFT. ALTHOUGH MUBOTO REQUESTED EGYPTIAN TROOPS, GAMASY HAS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED AGAINST THIS. SADAT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BOTY NYERE AND NUMEIRI TO ASSIST MUBOTO ON POLITICAL FRONT. END SUMMARY

1. MET DEPPRI/MIN/MINWAR GMASY TODAY FOR A BRIEFING ON FIND-
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INGS OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY DEL TO ZAIRE. GAMASY STATED HE HAD DISCUSSED ZAIRE WITH PRES DADAT TWO DAYS AGO AT WHICH TIME THE PRES HAD RECALLED HIS COMMITMENT TO PRES CARTER ON THIS MATTER AND ASKED THAT HE BRIEF ME. SADAT HAS SHOWN HIM PRES CARTER'S ORAL MESSAGE ON THE SUBJECT OF ZAIRE (REF A). GAMASY BRIEFED ME ON BASIS OF ARABIC SUMMARY OF MISSION'S REPORT WHICH HE HAD BEFORE HIM AND USING A MAP WITH MILITARY

POSITIONS MARKED ON IT. SOME OF HIS INFO DOUBTLESS ALREADY KNOWN TO WASHINGTON AGENCIES, BUT IS SUBMITTED AS GIVEN TO ME.

2. EGYPTIAN MISSION: EGYPTIAN MISSION, GAMASY EXPLAINED, HAD BEEN IN ZAIRE APRIL 8-14. AFTER ITS DEPARTURE, AN EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER AND AN OPERATIONS OFFICER HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND. AT PRESENT ONLY THE OPERATIONS OFFICER REMAINS. HE IS TASKED WITH (A) LIAISING WITH ZAIRE AND FRENCH/BELGIAN HEADQUARTERS AND (B) HANDLING FLIGHTS OF THE TWO EGYPTIAN ANTONOVs CURRENTLY DEPLOYED TO ZAIRE (SEE BELOW).

3. SHABA INVASION. SHABA REBELS IN ANGOLA, ACCORDING TO THE EGYPTIAN REPORT, FIRST PENETRATED FROM ANGOLA INTO SHABA ON MARCH 7 IN THREE DIRECTIONS: TOWARDS (A) KISSINGI, (B) DELULU, AND (C) KAPANGA. ALL, HE NOTED, ARE CLOSE TO THE BORDERS. THEY HAD INFILTRATED AS CIVILIANS WERE TAKEN IN THEIR TRIBAL KINSMEN IN SHABA. ACCORDING TO THE BEST ESTIMATES OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION, THERE ARE NO MORE THAN TWO TO THREE THOUSAND SUCH KATANGAN INVADERS. AFTER TAKING THE THREE AFOREMENTIONED TOWNS AND THE TOWN OF MUCHACHA, THEY CONTROL AN AREA WITH A 700 KILOMETER FRONT AND A DEPTH OF 100 TO 120 KILOMETERS TO THE BORDER. DURING THE DAY THEY HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE SHABAN TOWNS AND VILLAGES, BUT COME OUT AT NIGHT TO FIGHT AND AMBUSH. THEIR OBJECTIVE IS TO OCCUPY AND CONTROL KOWELZI, THE CAPITAL OF SHABA. NCE THEY CONTROL KOWELZE, GAMASY STATED, THEIR PURPOSE IS TO DECLARE SHABAS AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE. THEY WOULD THUS BE IN CONTROL OF 70 PERCENT OF ZAIRE'S MINERAL WEALTH.

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4. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO INVADERS: ALTHOUGH ALL AGREE THAT THE DISSIDENTS ARE FROM SHABA, FRENCH "WIRELESS RECONNAISSANCE" HAD OVERHEARD SOME PEOPLE SPEAKING SPANISH. GAMASY ASSUMED THAT THESE WERE CUBANS. SOME HAD ALSO SPOKEN PORTUGUESE, WHICH CONFIRMED THAT THE DISSIDENTS HAD COME FROM ANGOLA. IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION, HOWEVER, ANY SUCH FOREIGNERS ARE ASSISTING THE INVADERS MAINLY IN PLANNING, BUT NOT IN FIGHTING. THE SHABA DISSIDENTS ARE USING ONLY SMALL ARMS; RPGs, ANTI-TANK WEAPONS, MORTARS AND ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES.

5. FRIENDLY FORCES: GAMASY THEN DESCRIBED WHAT HE CALLED "OUR TROOPS". ZAIRE, HE NOTED, HAS PLENTY OF TROOPS, SPECIFICALLY, FOUR RANGER BATTALIONS AND FIVE PARACHUTE BATTALIONS. THERE HAD ALSO BEEN WHAT MUBOTO CALLED A "MECHANIZED" DIVISION, BUT IT HAD EARLIER DISCARDED ITS WEAPONS AND DISSOLVED. THE REMAINING BATTALIONS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING REORGANIZED AND TRAINED BY THE FRENCH/BELGIAN MILITARY DELEGATION IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM MORE

EFFICIENT AND TO INSTILL A MOTIVATION TO FIGHT. THE MAJOR PROBLEM, THE EGYPTIAN MISSION HAD FOUND, IS TROOP MORALE AND POOR DISCIPLINE. THE ZAIRIAN SOLDIERS DO NOT WANT TO FIGHT. MUBOTO AND HIS COMMANDERS ARE CONVINCED THAT THE SHABAN SITUATION WILL NOT BE CORRECTED UNLESS FOREIGN TROOPS ARE DEPLOYED IN ORDER TO FIGHT. THE FRENCH/BELGIAN MILITARY DEL HAD CONFIRMED THIS ESTIMATE TO THE EGYPTIANS.
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6. MOROCCAN FORCES: BECAUSE OF THIS SITUATION, GAMASY CONTINUED, MOROCCAN TROOPS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO ZAIRE. THEY ARE BASED ON KOWELZI. THEIR OPERATIONS ARE BEING PLANNED BY THE FRENCH/BELGIAN DELEGATION, WHOSE CONCEPT IS TO LAUNCH A COUNTER-OFFENSIVE FROM KOWELZI ON AN AXIS THROUGH MACHACHA, KISSINGI TO DELULU AS THE MAIN EFFORT. A SECONDARY EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TOWARD KAPINGA IN THE NORTH. SOME MOROCCAN TROOPS WERE IN FACT SENT FROM KOWELZI TOWARD MACHACHA BUT WERE STOPPED 30 KILOMETERS WEST OF KOWELZI. AT PRESENT, THEREFORE, THE MOROCCANS ARE MAINLY INVOLVED IN DEFENDING THE KOWELZI AREA FROM ALL SIDES. MUBOTO HAD GONE TO KOWELZI EXPECTING THE MACHACHA WOULD SOON BE TAKEN, BUT THIS HAS NOT YET OCCURED. IT MAY NOT BE TAKEN FOR SOME TIME.

7. THEATER OF OPERATIONS: GAMASY DESCRIBED THE DIFFICULT THEATER OF OPERATIONS, INVOLVING LARGELY JUNGLE COUNTRY AND AN ENEMY WHO CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED. ALSO, THE 1,000 KILOMETER LONG SUPPLY LINE TO KINSHASA AND THE LACK OF ANY LOCAL LOGISTICAL RESOURCES SUCH AS SUPPLIED OR POL. MOROCCAN AND THE SINGLE ZAIRIAN

BATTALION IN RESERVE NEAR KOWELZI MUST BE SUPPLIED
FROM AIRCRAFT FROM KINSHASA. MUBOTO HAD TOLD MOROCCANS
AND EGYPTIANS, THAT ZAIRE IS UNABLE GIVE FOREIGN
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TOOPS ANY ASSISTANCE. HENCE, ANY SUCH TROOPS MUST
BE COMPLETELY SELF-CONTAINED.

8. EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT IN ZAIRE: (A) IN ORDER TO
ASSIST THE MOROCCANS, GAMASY STATED, GOE HAS DEPLOYED
TWO ANTONOV AIRCRAFT, WHICH ARE CURRENTLY
SHUTTLING BETWEEN KINSHASA AND KOWELZI CARRYING
SUPPLIES. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY ABOUT WHAT HAD
HAPPENED TO THE IDEA OF USING THESE TRANSPORTS TO
AIRLIFT SUPPLIES FROM MOROCCO TO ZAIRE, GAMASY
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS HAD BEEN THE INTITIAL CONCEPT.
HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO DO SO , IT WAS
NECESSARY TO STAGE THROUGH SAPIN AND, AFTER MUCH
PALVER, THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAD REFUSED LANDING
RIGHTS. HENCE, THE AIRCRAFT HAD TO BE SENT ACROSS THE
SUDAN DIRECTLY TO ZAIRE FOR USE WITHIN THE COUNTRY.
ZAIRIANS, HE NOTED , HAVE FOUR C-130'S BUT LACK SPARE
PARTS AND POL. ZAIRIANS ALSO HAVE BETWEEN NINE
AND TWELVE MIRAGES, BUT HAVE NOT THUS FAR USED THEM
IN COMBAT. WHILE THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF ZAIRIAN
PILOTS, TWO OTHER ASPECTS PRECLUDE THEIR USE: (A) HOW
TO UTILIZE SUCH AIRCRAFT IN A THEATER OF OPERATIONS
IN WHICH THERE IS NO ENEMY CONCENTRATON OR
ADIMINSTRATIVE AREAS AND NO TARGETS; AND (B) ZAIRE DOES
NOT HAVE THE INFORMATION WHERE THE ENEMY IS ACTUALLY
LOCATED; HENCE, AIRCRAFT MIGHT BOMB FRIENDLY PEOPLES
OR CITIES. FOR TIME BEING EGYPTIAN HAVE DROPPED IDEA OF
SENDING MIRAGE CREWS. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, FRENCH BELGIAN
PLANNERS DECIDED THAT GROUND FORCES SHOULD BE THE MAIN
ELEMENT IN THE AREA. THEY SHOULD BE WELL TRAINED AS
RANGERS AND PARATROPPERS.

9. MOBUTO REQUEST TO EGYPT FOR TROOPS: GAMASY
ACKNOWLEDGED MUBOTO HAD TWICE ASKED SADAT FOR
EGYPTIAN TROOPS. ON THE FIRST OCCASION, HE HAD ASKED
FOR BLACK TROOPS; ON THE SECOND, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE
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RETURN OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION, HE HAD SIMPLY ASKED FOR
TROOPS. ALTHOUGH SADAT IS ANXIOUS TO HELP MUBOTO IN
EVERY WAY POSSIBLE, GAMASY HAD STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

AGAINST THE DEPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIAN TROOPS. PRESENT SITUATION, WITH DESULTORY FIGHTING, COULD GO ON FOR A LONG TIME. ZAIRE COULD BECOME ANOTHER YEMEN. MOREOVER, IF MUBOTO WILL NOT USE HIS OWN TROOPS, WHY SHOULD OTHERS DO MUBOTO'S FIGHTING? GOE, GAMASY STATED, IS READY TO HELP WITH ADVISERS, TRANSPORT OR THE LIKE, BUT NOT WITH TROOPS. THE FRENCH/BELGIAN MISSION TOLD EGYPTIANS THAT THE AVAILABLE ZAIRIAN TROOPS WILL NEED AT LEAST TEN OR TWELVE WEEKS FROM NOW TO BE ORGANIZED, TRAINED AND MOTIVATED TO FIGHT.

10. CLASH BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE: GAMASY RECALLED THE TENSION RESULTING FROM ZAIRIAN BOMBING OF ZAMBIA. SADAT, HE RELATED, HAD SENT A URGENT MESSAGE TO NYERE ASKING THE LATTER TO USE HIS INFLUENCE TO PREVENT THE INCIDENT FROM ESCALATING. SADAT HAD ALSO SENT A MESSAGE TO NUMEIRI ASKING THAT SHABANS NOW LIVING IN THE SUDAN NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO SHABA AT THIS TIME. THEY MIGHT JOIN THE DISSIDENTS. NUMEIRI HAD AGREED.

11. GAMASY'S OWN VIEWS: GAMASY WAS CLEARLY CONCERNED ABOUT SADAT'S INTEREST IN HELPING MUBOTO. HE IS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO SENDING EGYPTIAN TROOPS AND SOPRE SCATHINGLY OF MUBOTO'S CORRUPTION. IT IS THIS CORRUPTION, GAMASY ASSERTED, WHICH MAKES THE ZAIRIAN TROOPS UNWILLING TO FIGHT FOR MUBOTO. UNLESS AND UNTIL MUBOTO CHANGES, AND GAMASY DOUBTED THE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY SUCH CHANGE HE WILL NOT WIN THE LOYALTY OF HIS PEOPLE AND OTHERS WILL BE ASKED TO DO THE FIGHTING FOR HIM. SADAT KEEPS PRESSING HIM TO FIND SOME WAY TO HELP MUBOTO, BUT THE TASK IS DIFFICULT. GAMASY HOPED USG MIGHT SEND SAPRE PARTS AND POL SO THAT ZAIRE'S OWN C-130'S CAN BE USED WITH THE COUNTRY. HE

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UNDERTOOK TO KEEP US INFORMED IF EGYPT RECEIVES ANY NEW INFORMATION.

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Message Attributes

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